THE
RECONSTRUCTIONIST

DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF JUDAISM AS A RELIGIOUS CIVILIZATION, TO THE UPBUILDING OF ISRAEL'S ANCIENT HOMELAND, AND TO THE FURTHERANCE OF UNIVERSAL FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE.

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EDITORIALS

Antifa

WHILE the Royal Commission continues its deliberations in London, seeking to probe the causes of the riots that raged in Palestine for six months during 1936, the Jewish world frantically strives to solve the problem of the periodic outbreaks which jeopardize the constructive achievements of Palestine Jewry, threaten the morale of all sincere Zionists, and plunge Palestine into bloody conflict. Since 1917, three major attacks have been launched against the *yishub,* each fiercer than the preceding. Are these attacks inevitable? Will the victims of persecution and hatred, searching for peace and security in Palestine, never find a true haven of refuge?

The RECONSTRUCTIONIST has repeatedly maintained that lasting peace in Palestine will not be realized until Zionists formulate a clear and unequivocal program of cooperation with the Arab people. The events of the last months have revealed that such a program is indispensable. Thus far, numerous suggestions have been profferred, but none have shaken the Arabs from their rigid intransigence. Arab leaders have remained as adamantly opposed to the entire Zionist venture as before.

Particular interest, therefore, has been aroused by the recent arrival from Palestine of a delegation representing *Antifa,* (the Palestinian League Against War and Fascism and For Jewish-Arab Solidarity). For the first time, we are presented with a united front of Jew and Arab. The two delegates, M. Erem, a Jew, and Najib Yusuf, an Arab, are planning a series of mass meetings throughout the land, to explain the purposes of *Antifa,* and to arouse popular support for their cause.

Antifa sees "no reason why peaceful relations cannot prevail between Jews and Arabs. There is room in Palestine for both peoples, and there is a basis for their cooperation. . . . Palestine . . . must no longer be a pawn in the imperialist chess game. National strife and race-hatred must be destroyed. Both peoples must cooperate economically and politically. "To achieve this end, *Antifa* offers a seven point program, which includes cooperation in that many fields of work: (1) Social Contact: encouraging greater contact between Jewish and Arab workers, peasants, and intellectual elements; organizing conferences and meetings to encourage and strengthen common understanding. (2) Politics: implanting the consciousness that both people are building up the country, "linked together by one lot and one future;" frustrating the evil designs of Great Brit-

ain's "divide and rule" stategy. (3) Economic Relationship: "to oppose each and every slogan of boycott, of national isolation and mutual distrust; to establish common economic institutions, producers' and consumers' cooperatives, mutual credit institutions, etc. (4) Trade Union Organization: to establish a progressive Arab trade union movement and coordinate its activities with those of the Histadrut. (5) Cultural Work: organizing classes for adults in Arab, Yiddish and Hebrew; establishing cultural connections with the progressive groups in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq; setting up a progressive press to serve the Arabs in Palestine and elsewhere, and the Arabic speaking Jews. (6) Scientific Research Work: establishing a scientific institute for research work to gather and issue material on Jewish and Arab life in general and to make a special study of the agrarian problem in Palestine and neighboring lands. (7) Social Educational Work: "to carry on systematic propaganda in the Histadrut for the enrollment of the Arab workers as members in the Histadrut on the basis of language sections; to transform the economic institutions of the Histadrut into common institutions."

This program is posited upon the assumption that the Arab masses are not opposed to the presence of Jews in Palestine. It accepts the conclusions of most impartial observers that the Arab masses have had their standards of living raised by the Jewish labor movement. *Antifa* believes that the Arab people has been wrongly condemned for the riots which were, actually, the work of the fascist effendis. "The Arabs as a people must not be held responsible for the conduct of their reactionary elements. . . ." The implication of this approach, then, is that if the Arab masses and the Jewish workers were made to realize their common lot and destiny, they would unite against the British imperialists, the Jewish profit-seekers, and the Arab effendis.

The RECONSTRUCTIONIST brings this program to the attention of its readers in the hope that they will give it their serious consideration. Let them ask themselves whether such a program is feasible, and if so, whether it will serve the best interests of the Jews who are in Palestine and those who are hoping to come there. If they approve, let them declare their approval; if opposed, let them clearly and unmistakably enunciate their objections. It is time that this problem were tackled energetically. Now that a concrete program has been formulated, a basis for discussion is created.

The Supreme Court Issue

THE frenzied furor raised by the reactionary press against President Roosevelt's plan to reform the Supreme Court is the best indication that the President has once again spoken for the common man and against the "economic royalists." What did President Roosevelt propose with regard to the Supreme Court? In his message to Congress on the reform of the Federal judiciary, he asked for the power to appoint a new judge to supplement each Federal judge over seventy years of age—including the judges of the Supreme Court, the size of the Supreme Court, however, not to exceed fifteen.

What prompted the President to make this proposal is the fact that the Supreme Court has decided against New Deal legislation eleven out of sixteen times. With a popular mandate of twenty-seven million votes, and with the impressive backing of forty-six out of forty-eight states, the President feels that the popular will ought to be heeded by the Supreme Court and he proposes to appoint new members, who, he hopes, will be more responsive to the expressed will of the masses.

Because the Constitution does not specify the number of justices to be named to the high bench, and because the Constitution does provide life-tenure for Federal judges, the President felt constrained to induce voluntary retirement at full pay of those judges who reached the age of

seventy, or else to enlarge the Supreme Court up to the number of fifteen.

As the President pointed out in his message, there is ample precedent for this suggested reform, for the practice of increasing the number of judges on the Supreme Court is no novelty in American history. Originally, the Supreme Court was established with six judges, and was subsequently reduced to five, increased to seven, then to nine, then to ten, then reduced to seven, and finally (in 1869) increased once more to nine, at which number it has since remained.

The President's plan, however, while being a clever and expedient device for insuring the validation of New Deal legislation, does not strike at the heart of the difficulty involved, namely—the problem of judicial usurpation of power that rightfully belongs to the people and their elected representatives. For in the last analysis, the President's proposal leaves the power of the Supreme Court just where it was before, with this difference—that the majority of the Court dictating what sort of legislation we can have will be at most eight, instead of five, as now.

In a rapidly changing world it may be necessary for the country to have even newer deals in 1941 or 1945. What assurance is there that the newly appointed judges will not develop a hardening of intellectual and moral arteries so as not to thwart the will of the people under another and even more progressive administration? Nor have the judges appointed by Presidents always decided in favor of him who placed them on the bench. One case in point will suffice. President Andrew Jackson had violently denounced the Court under Chief Justice Marshall, on the score of usurping power. Yet, the Chief Justice whom he appointed (Roger B. Taney) was the gentleman who rendered the opinion in the famous Dred Scott case—a decision which more than any other act precipitated the Civil War. Nor would it be amiss to point out that age does not, of itself, necessarily breed infirmity and illiberalism. Witness the shining examples of Justice Louis D. Brandeis, aged 80, and the late Oliver Wendel Holmes who retired at the age of 90.

The best, therefore, that can be said for the President's plan is, to use his own words, that it only takes care of "present needs." Like the New Deal legislation itself, this judicial new deal is an artificial and ineffectual way of temporarily correcting a situation that in reality needs complete overhauling.

The real problem concerning the Supreme Court is one of democracy vs. dictatorship. In a democracy (capitalist no less than socialist) the power to govern rests with the people and their representatives elected at stated intervals through an honest and free system of elections. This is called representative government. In a dictatorship, however, we have the imposition of the will of a minority upon the great majority of the population. This is government by autocratic decree.

The people elect congressmen and senators whom they empower to legislate for the country at large. But along come the members of the Supreme Court (in reality a majority of five men, not elected by the people, but appointed for life and not subject to recall) and sit in judgment over the legislative branch of the government. These men are usually elderly prosperous attorneys who have spent a large part of their professional life as legal representatives of "big business." Their background and training qualify them for the role which they are expected to serve, namely as a bulwark of the propertied class against the propertyless.

There is nothing in the Constitution regarding the veto power of the Supreme Court over the acts of Congress. The judiciary was supposed to be a coordinate branch of the government. Yet time and again, the Court has nullified progressive legislation and declared it unconstitutional. It invalidated the NRA because it maintained that Congress had delegated too broad powers to the President, and had through the codes dealt with intra-

state matters not within its purview. It declared the AAA unconstitutional because it held that the Constitution gave no express power to Congress to regulate agriculture. It is interesting to note in this connection that Justice Stone in a minority decision once accused the majority of the Court of adopting "a tortured construction of the Constitution" and of reading their own "personal economic predilection" into the fundamental law of the land.

As things stand now, Congress cannot legislate about wages, hours, prices, production, etc., insofar as these practices do not *directly* affect interstate commerce. Only the states may regulate "intrastate" commerce. This leaves Congress powerless to deal with all the economic and social questions which today are national and international in character.

Our problem today, therefore, is how to make democracy function once again. If ours is to be a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people," then the Constitution must be taken from the Supreme Court and restored to the people.

When the "Liberty League" reactionaries who selfishly benefit from the inequities of the status quo accuse the President of interfering with judicial "independence" or of "packing" the Court and of seeking "dictatorship," their arguments are hollow and unconvincing. The "independence" of the Court is a myth, unless being weighted on the side of the propertied interests makes a court independent. Nor does President Roosevelt intend to "pack" the Court. The Court is already "packed" against the common man. The President hopes to "unpack" it so as to make it more responsive to the will of the people. Likewise, it is the Court that has arrogated unto itself an unwarranted despotism, i. e., a judicial veto to congressional enactments, which power is itself unconstitutional, thereby making of the Court a dictatorship which rules *over* instead of *under* the Constitution. At least the President has a mandate from the vast majority of the population; not so the Supreme Court.

What is to be done? Plainly, what is needed is an amendment. Only an amendment to the Constitution giving Congress explicit power to regulate industry and agriculture could resolve the impasse in which the country finds itself.

The present governmental set-up stands as a threat to the successful working of our democracy. For the presumed dictatorship by the Court thwarts the expressed will of the people, obstructs progress and invites revolution.

It has been suggested that Congress pass legislation giving Congress the power to override the Supreme Court's veto. It has also been suggested that Congress limit the Supreme Court's veto. It has also been suggested that Congress limit the Supreme Court's veto to a two-thirds vote. But such legislation, even if passed, might eventually have to be enacted into amendments anyway, if the question of their constitutionality should be raised. We therefore advocate a different type of amendment.

While we consider the President's proposals with regard to the Supreme Court as inadequate and in the long run ineffective, we favor them nevertheless as emergency measures to be accepted (the method of constitutional amendment being prolonged and cumbersome anyway); but we also urge renewed vigor in the furtherance of the Workers' Rights Amendment as sponsored by the Socialist Party, granting Congress positive powers over social legislation which they do not now possess. This amendment was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Marcantonio, and reads as follows:

"Section 1. Congress shall have power to establish uniform laws throughout the United States to regulate, limit and prohibit the labor of persons under 18 years of age, to provide for the relief of aged, invalided, sick and unemployed wage earners and employees, in the form of periodical grants, pensions, benefits, com-

pensation, or indemnities from the public treasury, from contribution of employers, or from one or more such sources, to establish and take over natural resources, properties and enterprises in manufacturing, commerce, transportation, banking, public utilities and other business to be owned and operated by the government of the United States or agencies thereof for the benefit of the people; and generally for the social and economic welfare of the workers of the United States.

"Section 2. The power of the several states to enact social welfare legislation is unimpaired by this article, but no such legislation shall supersede, abridge or conflict with any act of Congress under this article."

While urging our representatives to adopt the Roosevelt judiciary reforms, let us also apprise them of our demand for a constitutional amendment such as the above.

—o—

The Function of The Jewish Press*

By Louis Minsky**

THE function of the Jewish press in normal times differs from its function in times of stress and persecution. During periods of tranquility the chief concern of Jewish organs is a positive one, consisting largely of recording and interpreting the progress of Jewish religion, education, and Jewish communal life in general. During periods of anti-Semitic agitation such as the present, the Jewish press adds a negative or defensive function. It concerns itself both with recording anti-Jewish attacks and answering anti-Semitic slanders.

Proper treatment of constructive Jewish life on the one hand and external developments menacing the Jewish community on the other are the two basic functions of the Jewish press. But it is an unfortunate characteristic of our press that during abnormal times, such as these, there is a tendency to overemphasize the negative side at the expense of the positive side of Jewish life. In some instances this amounts to a virtual obsession with Jewish misery, which blots out every sign of hopeful Jewish endeavor and leaves the reader with the feeling that there is an anti-Semite under every bed.

This tendency is both unfortunate and dangerous for the reason that the positive side of Jewish life needs never to be emphasized so much or so often as when the Jews are under fire. The inevitable result of anti-Semitic activity is to put the Jew on the defensive or give him a feeling of inferiority. This means that the task of Jewish leadership is to inspire Jews with a faith in the worth of Judaism and Jewish life as a buttress against an incipient inferiority complex. Consequently, it is necessary to stress to Jews during such periods the strength and beauty of Judaism, its contributions to human progress and to make being a Jew more meaningful than ever before.

Upon the Jewish press should fall a large measure of responsibility for furthering this task. The Jewish communal newspaper should carry news of constructive developments in the life of local Jewry and of national Jewish movements. Through its editorial columns it should place proper emphasis upon identification with these constructive endeavors. It should point out that there is much positive work to be done in Israel and it should help to inspire its readers with the

*Address delivered at Round Table on the Jewish Press, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Sunday, January 17, 1937.

**Associate Editor, National Conference of Jews and Christians News Service.

joy of laboring for Jewish causes or for general causes as Jews.

This positive function should be implicit in the Jewish newspaper but it is equally important that the paper deal in a proper manner with negative developments. The negative task of the Jewish newspaper is, however, far more difficult than the positive one. It requires good editorship, a sense of responsibility and restraint, a regard for the feelings of readers, a knowledge of the technique of propaganda, and above all, an appreciation of the fact that the Jewish newspaper is not a disseminator of news in the sense of the daily paper, but the organ, spokesman or representative of the Jewish community.

Most Jewish newspapers make the mistake of assuming that their principal function is to disseminate news. In the case of some papers—such as The Yiddish Press—this is doubtless true. But the Yiddish paper, which is the foreign language counterpart of the daily secular newspaper, is something different from the Jewish weekly which represents the organized English speaking community and which, in addition, is read by non-Jews. The purpose of such a weekly should be to further Jewish communal endeavor and Jewish ideals, to defend the community against attacks and to interpret the community to the general non-Jewish community. In the light of these aims the primary function of the newspaper becomes not reportorial but editorial. The thought back of the editor's mind at all times must be not the potentialities of journalistic exploitation inherent in any news story but the good and well being of the community.

This thought, I regret to say, has not been the dominating one in the handling of negative developments in some Jewish papers. The treatment of negative news has been chaotic and irresponsible. Constructive Jewish life has been nearly forgotten about. A stranger from Mars, reading some of our papers, would get the impression that Jewish journals are organs of some sort of society for the advancement of misery and woe. Papers have developed a tendency to give publicity to the antics of every kind of minor anti-Semitic crackpot, when nine-tenths of them should be treated with deadly silence. They have pounced upon the ravings of would-be dictators with a limelight complex and featured their inanities in bold black headlines. They have featured magnificent descriptions of various forms of torture used against the Jews by European anti-Semites, thus giving Jew-haters everywhere new ideas. They have detailed at length every adversity of the Jew, giving their readers a feeling of hopelessness and a severe case of the jitters.

It is the argument of some editors that facts are facts and they should not be ignored. They point to the daily press as an indication that the bad facts of life should be printed along with the common or garden variety of news. This example, however, is based upon the theory that the daily press is an ideal medium for emulation, a theory with which many will disagree. Some will hold that the daily press is to a large extent a sensational press which places a major emphasis upon really unimportant matters. Because some daily newspapers have no regard for the feelings of civilized readers is no reason why the Jewish press should follow suit. But it must be remembered that even the daily press exercises a censorship over the news. This censorship centers both in the treatment and the selection of news.

This is not to say that the Jewish paper should suppress important news just because it is unpleasant. But I believe that it should suppress a certain kind of news which is calculated to do harm either to the personality of the Jew or to efforts for the proper counteraction of anti-Semitism.

Let me cite one or two examples. The first is an actual one. A few months ago a communist journal carried a story to the effect that a crack-brained Jew-baiter in Washington, who has since, according to

reports, gone out of business as an "economic consultant," had told a reporter of this journal that he was planning a pogrom of American Jews a couple of months hence. The magazine in question featured this story in scare headlines on its front cover. Immediately, Jewish newspapers throughout the country picked up the story and ran it in banner page headlines, sending shivers down the spines of their readers. The story was ridiculous on the face of it. Editors committed the unpardonable error of not using their own judgment but taking their cue from the communist journal which originated the story. Because this journal played up the story in scare headlines Jewish newspapers did the same thing. Jewish editors consequently fell into a communistic trap. The featuring of this story served no useful purpose and the story itself did not fall into the category of what should legitimately constitute Jewish news. The story was definitely harmful to the Jewish community because it contributed to the creation of a hysteria complex among Jews. During times such as the present it is a major responsibility of the Jewish editor to help Jews keep sane and help them maintain a balanced outlook in their approach to anti-Semitism.

The second example which I select is a hypothetical one which has nevertheless been more or less duplicated on many occasions in the past. Let us say that an anti-Semitic leader denounces the Jews as being the scum of the earth. Now there are some Jewish editors who would run this story and quote everything the Jew-hater says on the ground that this is news. This policy is not only undesirable but it is definitely dangerous because the repetition of libels is always dangerous. The publication of such a story always entails the risk of lowering the Jew in his own estimation, but more than this, there is the danger that it will also have an effect upon the non-Jewish reader. I believe it to be true that while libels may be generally discounted there is always a residue which remains in the consciousness of the Christian reader. I believe, therefore, that the Jewish press should make it a general rule to avoid going into careful descriptions of libelous attacks. Where it is absolutely necessary to report such attacks the method should be to make a general statement such as "In a speech today, Prof. Cuza of Rumania denounced the Jews," instead of "In a speech today Prof. Cuza said the Jews are parasites, blood-suckers and the scum of the earth."

As a general rule I believe that the Jewish newspaper can be most helpful to Jewish life by playing up only those negative developments which are of first importance and by playing down or ignoring all other negative news. There is no obligation upon the Jewish newspaper to report every single development which occurs for, as I have already indicated, not even the daily newspaper does this. There is no useful purpose served in making Jews miserable by continually bringing to their attention the activities of every minor anti-Semite in the four corners of the globe. These activities are the concern of our experienced defense organizations and not of the ordinary Jew.

Rather should the Jewish newspaper place the emphasis upon the proper counteraction of anti-Semitism. This it can do in several ways. One is to make it a policy to play up counteractive developments instead of merely recording attacks against the Jews. Another is to feature local and national developments in the movement for closer understanding between Christians and Jews. A third is to make it a primary function of the newspaper to serve as an ambassador to the Jewish community to the Christian community, to interpret Jews to Christians. This means that the newspaper should definitely go out for Christian readers. But, above all, the newspaper should not forget the constructive side of Jewish life. It should make it its business to stimulate interest in Judaism, in the synagogue, in philanthropy, in social justice, in Palestine, and in the manifold other activities which are the concern of the Jew.

In closing, let me say that one of the great needs of the Jewish press is for the formation of a national Jewish Press Association composed of editors of Jewish newspapers. Such a body could hold an annual meeting where common problems of the Jewish press could be discussed. It could be the instrumentation for improving the Jewish press, for making it more useful to the community and Jewish life in general. This Association would undertake the function of a Round Table on the press, such as this. It would be a clearing house for journalistic and publishing problems facing Jewish newspapers. It would consider attitudes towards problems facing the Jews. It might even undertake a joint national campaign for increasing the circulation of Jewish papers as does the Catholic press, through its annual "Catholic Press Month," which is held every February and which has substantially helped to increase the circulation of Catholic newspapers. Both the Catholic and Protestant press have such associations and, I believe, a similar Jewish group would serve a valuable purpose.

The Situation of The Jews in Poland

By JACOB LESTCHINSKY*

Translated from the Yiddish
By Samuel Dinin

(Concluded)

VI

WE are living in a time of stagnation, in the period of late-capitalism, without broad perspectives, and possibilities of expansion. We are living in a society of controlled economy, of an economic nationalism with autarchic tendencies, in which each nation lives within its own boundaries and within the limits of its own resources and powers of development. In the 19th century the birth of the Christian middle class was everywhere accompanied by Jewish pogroms and excesses; is it surprising that the late birth of the Polish bourgeoisie should be attended by a sacrifice of the Jewish masses?

The above-quoted citation—although it gives us a great many facts and a notion of how the peasant masses are turning to petty trade and of the tendency of the town populations to go into "middle trade," does not sufficiently give us the concrete atmosphere in which the expulsion of the Jews is occurring. Permit me therefore to quote a few more paragraphs from the "Tygodnik Polityczny," the weekly of the National Democratic Party, the oldest anti-Semitic party, which conducts, and must bear the greatest responsibility for, the physical pogroms and the economic ruin of the Jewish population.

In the 'Tygodnik Polityczny" of June 15, 1936, appears the following: "The midweekly fair (the first after the pogrom of the second of June) in the Minsk-Mazowiecki, has shown great progress. The figures published below indicate a styxian drive of the local population toward trade and economic struggle with the Jewish population. In this struggle, the Poles are emerging victorious. Recently, as a matter of fact, during the past week and in the very last few days, there have appeared 104 *Polish market stands,* including one for the sale of caps, six for manufactured articles, one for cloths, eight for bakeries, four for men's furnishings, twenty-two for vegetables and fruit, six for soap, twelve for shoes, one for enameled ware, etc."

*The first half of Dr. Lestchinsky's article was published in the preceding issue of the RECONSTRUCTIONIST.

The paper lists a large number of items for which there are no Polish stores, such as hats, leather, summer-shoes, rope, and enumerates for each of these how many Jewish stores there are, and continues: "There are a large number of Polish candidates, local and recently arrived, making every attempt to open such businesses. There are enough candidates for these businesses, but there are difficulties arising out of local conditions. The Jews are stubborn and refuse to leave their *empty* stores, unwilling to come out in open struggle. Not in vain are thousands of charity contributions flowing into Minsk-Mazowiecki from Poland and other countries. Despite this, there are still many cases of Jews who are glad to get rid of their immovable goods—houses, stands, stores, booths."

In the same newspaper, a correspondent from Zgierz, a factory town near Lodz, writes with great joy that "entire branches of trade, in which Jews had a monopoly, have gone over into Christian hands." The newspaper publishes a big table in which all branches are enumerated, and it indicates that in place of 293 Jewish businesses, there are now 359 non-Jewish businesses. The newspaper adds, "The action is not fast enough, because the Poles still lack experience, but in its place we see a determined will and stubbornness to hold on to the positions gained."

In the same newspaper there is a weekly caption: "A fair without Jews." Any town or village which has reached the point where Jews no longer come to it is praised with song and dance, as the issue of the same paper of April 19, 1931 attests.

I could write a great deal about the city magistrates who literally torture the Jewish merchants by means of taxes and judgments. But it will suffice to mention only this. In June 1936, delegations of Jewish merchants from Czestochowa, Garwolin, Nowy Dwor, and from a few cities in Volhynia, came to Warsaw to get the edict of two magistrates annulled. These magistrates had demanded that the Jews clean out of the places they occupied. The excuse given was that a change in plans had taken place; the real reason was that they wanted to *give the places to the Christians.* Such delegations from the small towns come to Warsaw every week. They raise an outcry, they run to see some minister, they get a promise that the interests of the Jews will be protected—and in a few weeks the news arrives that the places were taken away from the Jews and given to the Christians, or that the fair had been transferred from the center of the town to a point nearer the village.

VII

This entire theme is itself so broad that it is impossible to treat of it satisfactorily without going into it at great length. Let me therefore summarize: the growth of trade among the Christian population is not of recent origin. The percentage of Jews in trade had begun to fall even before the War. This process, however, was slow and gradual and did not vitally affect the Jewish population. The absolute number of Jews in trade continued to grow, although proportionately it declined.

Jews in trade constituted, for example:

	In 1897	In 1921
In Congress-Poland	75.4%	66.8%
In Eastern-Galicia (in 1900)	88.6	85.7
In Western-Galicia (in 1900)	77.0	67.4
In Lodz	67.8	61.6

In the city of Warsaw the Jews constituted:

79.3%	in 1882
62.1%	in 1897
60.0%	in 1921
54.0%	in 1926
51.4%	in 1931

There is no doubt that the percentage of Jews has declined much further in the last years, and the Jews in Warsaw now constitute less than half of those engaged in trade. For the first time in 180 years the *absolute* number of Jews in trade in Warsaw has declined, while the absolute number of non-Jews has increased. Thus, in Warsaw there were in trade:

129,261 Jews	in 1921
120,705 Jews	in 1931

With non-Jews the reverse is true: in 1921 only 81,895 persons were engaged in trade, but in 1931 there were already 108,635. Thus there were 8,000 fewer Jews and an additional 27,000 non-Jews who made a living from trade during this period.

Unfortunately we do not have the data regarding the professions of Jews and non-Jews even for 1931, when there was a census. But in the past three or four years a revolution has been taking place in this field: the "drang" to trade has assumed a styxian mass character among the Polish population both in the villages and towns. The Polish village, despite its poverty and neglect, still offers greater cultural opportunities than it did in the period before or right after the War. If a young man has been graduated from a folk school or has seen or read a few newspapers, has listened to the radio a few times, danced a few times in the church to the tunes of a gramophone, and has been taken on a tour to Warsaw by his teachers to see some exposition and to imbibe (incidentally) the spirit of patriotism, he is a competitor to the Jews of a sort different from the sons of the Polish peasant of yesterday. He is more easily influenced, more impudent, more cynical, more chauvinistic, and more menacing.

Thirty-five to 38 percent of the Jewish population live by trade. During the past year this percentage may have declined, though not much. We must, therefore, reckon with a *million Jews who live by trade.* Of this million, 800,000 are engaged in petty trade. Such trade is now the most insecure. In normal times such trade gave the Jews barely enough to buy dry bread; today it is more heartache than a means of earning a livelihood. The Jew is not *driven out* everywhere; more often he is cleverly shunted off. Competing Christian stores and stands are opened, and the Jews are outrivalled, boycotted, impoverished by taxes, persecuted by judgments, wounded morally by the provocations all around them, physically beaten and weary, driven mad by worry about the morrow, the coming generation.

This process of decline, from large scale trade to middle scale trade, from middle scale trade to petty trade, from petty trade to street peddling, is sudden and intensive. And from that to the threshold of beggary is a short step, which has already been taken by hundreds of thousands.

VIII

I thought it much better to discuss one question more or less basically than just to touch upon the many important and complicated problems involved. I have naturally discussed the problem which is the sorest wound in the body of Polish Jewry. We have space now only for a cursory examination of the problem of the handicrafts, of labor, of the intelligentsia, and of the declassed.

There are in Poland about 200,000 workshops owned by Jewish workers and workers in home-industry, employing about that many workers and apprentices. These workers also feel the pressure of the competition of the new streams of non-Jewish masses, and of the anti-Semitic movement with its boycott-politics. In the case of these Jewish workers too the government is pursuing an open and outspoken policy of expelling the Jews and helping the non-Jews to take their places. By giving only non-Jewish children access to the professional schools; by means of cheap credit, made available to non-Jewish handworkers; by means of the guilds and handicraft unions and chambers which are controlled by non-Jews (though in many places the Jews have an absolute majority, and in some trades the Jewish artisans have a majority in all of Poland, except Posen and Pomerania), and by means of other privileges given to non-Jewish artisans, and restrictions upon Jews, the *organic* process of growth of the non-Jewish artisans is given artificial impetus.

It is, however, easier to set up a stand in the market and sell bread or fruits, or stockings and clocks, than to become a tailor or a watchmaker. It is even easier to open a store in no matter what line and attract the local Christian customers away from the Jews than to establish a workshop for ready-made clothing or gloves or stockings, for in the latter work one must be able to buy the raw material, learn the work, and organize the sale of the products in local and foreign markets. For this reason the process of driving the Jews out of the handicrafts is a slower one, a more difficult one, a more complicated one. It makes the struggle more protracted, weakens the effect of the oppressive competition, and gives the Jews an opportunity to transfer to new lines of endeavor.

The Jewish artisan in the small town, who used to get the village trade, is the first victim. He is forced to emigrate to the large cities, where he opens a small sweat industry, which competes for the local and foreign market. Confectioneries, stockings, knitwear, gloves, berets, are produced so cheaply in the Jewish sweat and hunger workshops that Jewish firms from Bialystok, Lodz and other towns penetrate even into India, through London intermediaries; Warsaw firms penetrate even further. Jewish labor in Poland competes against the cheapest *Asiatic* labor.

The number of Jews in Warsaw engaged in trade decreased by 8,000 from 1921-1931, but the number engaged in the handicrafts and petty industry *increased during the same period by* 30,000. And though in all the Polish cities the number has declined by 20-25 percent, the percentage in Lodz has remained almost stationary.

The struggle in this field too, is a difficult and unequal one; the enemy is stronger and better armed; but the uncertainty is not so great as in trade.

The Jewish working class has in the last few years become quantitatively larger. In 1921 there were in Poland 205,000 workers and 47,000 managers and officials. Now there are more than 300,000 workers and about 100,000 managers and officials. Together there are about 400,000 wage-earners. The number of "black-laborers," heavy workers, and cheap workers has grown tremendously. The ten thousand pioneers who hew wood in the yards of Vilna and Bialystok, who drag logs, who work at the hardest and most dangerous kind of labor in the glass factories—all these idealistic labor-victims are only the vanguard of the large impoverished and miserable Jewish mass, which is ready to sacrifice its body, its sweat and blood for a piece of bread. These labor-idealists are only an echo of the hundred thousands of children of the ruined middle class and petit bourgeoisie who are ready to accept any kind of work, any labor as long as it will save them from the hopelessness of the class into which they were born.

The condition of the Jewish labor class has not improved at all. It is still concentrated in the Jewish sweat and hunger workshops. 61.3 percent of all Jewish day laborers in Warsaw in 1934 worked in shops which had fewer than 5 workers; 87.9 percent of all Jewish undertakings with Jewish workers had from 1-5 workers. There have been some few slight labor victories in the large industries: in the textile industry in Lodz, in the new industries established by Jews (such as rubber, canned goods, and a few others); but the victories have been few and slight, and have not changed the sweat character of the Jewish working class.

As a result, the class struggle among the Jews has become a *"class bedlam,"* and a *"class fist fight"* without enduring material consequences and without political success, because the partner in the struggle of the Jewish worker is too often the sweated and hungry handworker or worker in the home industry.

We have no accurate information about the number of Jewish unemployed. If we reckon from 35-40 percent of all Jewish workers as unemployed, we can get some idea of the total, approximately 150,000.

Of these, 80 percent have no unemployment insurance, because they are engaged in workshops with fewer than 5 workers. The data we have about the percentage of Jewish workers in the small work shops in Warsaw are not typical for all of Poland. The Jewish unemployed is doomed to hunger; he cannot look for work even in the projects organized for the unemployed by the state and city governments. Only a fortunate few Jews receive such work. Here are a few facts:

In Kalisz, of 200 unemployed engaged in such projects, there were only 2 Jews or 1 percent; of 4,000 thus engaged in Warsaw there were 250 Jews or 6.2 percent; of 3,000 in Lodz, only 30 Jews or 1 percent.; of 300 in Bedzin, only 8 Jews or 2.7 percent. In addition, all branches of industry in which Jews are occupied are seasonal and a Jewish worker is free on the average of from 4-6 months a year.

The great army of Jewish unemployed has a lot in common with the Jewish declassed masses. We have no figures about the declassed. It is difficult to obtain such an estimate because among the declassed are included so many miscellaneous groups: Jewish teachers, dismissed from government schools, both city and state; Jewish engineers who go around unemployed for from 5-10 years and are ready to accept the dirtiest kind of labor in order not to lose their human dignity; Jewish philosophers, philologists, jurists, economists, all graduates of universities, who accept jobs as teachers, bookkeepers, secretaries, in any kind of business, and consider a position paying 100 zlotys a month a fortune; bankrupt storekeepers, victims of taxes, pogroms, boycotts, crises, unemployment; and the whole mass of Jewish young men and women who are old enough to work, are looking for positions and are ready to accept any kind of work for any wage, and under any conditions as long as they get the feeling that they are gainfully employed.

As I have said, the number of all these is unknown. There is no doubt that they number not tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands. These two armies of the unemployed and the declassed, constitute the 30-35 percent of the Jewish population dependent on charity. But at least a *third* of all the Jewish population is so abysmally poor that they do not know what the morrow will bring and by what miracle they will survive the night.

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The Future of Cooperatives

By MARVIN B. GELBER

THE failure of the liberal movement to mature a specific economic philosophy has largely contributed to its spectacular decline in the last few decades. The instability of the social system of the western world is all too lamentably bound up with rigidities in its economic base. And while the political objectives of democracy have been sufficiently well defined, the liberals have been too optimistic in taking for granted that civic liberty would emancipate the masses from insecurity.

Dr. Horace Kallen, in his most recent book,* is concerned about supplying that political faith with the appropriate economic technique for ensuring the progressive democratization of democratic peoples. In an age that is fascinated by the beating of the tom-toms of the extremist cults, he refuses to believe that liberalism is a dubious middle road between fascism and communism. He poses social democracy, not as a compromise, but as a distinct alternative that can alone check the decay of our civilization.

In 1844 the weavers of Rochdale united in cooperative enterprise to seek shelter from the anarchy of capitalist production and distribution. They formulated their pattern of organization in keeping with the needs of their daily lives. They were not conscious of the historical importance of their venture. They did not fashion themselves the architects of a new social system. They were merely reading the obvious lesson from the necessities of their daily, humdrum existence. They were peculiarly important in one respect. Instead of seeking refuge from reality in semi-barbaric prejudices or immersing themselves in the hysteria of an economic revivalism —as their grandchildren are now counselled by the paragons of the rival mystic faiths—they preferred the road of ordinary common sense, and prepared to build with the materials ready at hand.

Dr. Kallen reviews the various attempts throughout the world to build cooperative institutions. He notes their failures and their triumphs. And of all the experiments that followed Rochdale and of all the powerful vested interests that have since grown up around the principle of cooperative economic functioning, he feels that the fundamental ideas matured by the Rochdale pioneers must prevail if the new society is to fulfill its mission of democratizing the base of our economic system.

The principle of consumer cooperation, he believes, must be primary, or else the whole movement will be steered from its objectives. The dominance of the producer mentality is as great a menace to the world of cooperation as it has been in the universe of competitive capitalism. It is the prevalence of this emphasis on production that has spelt the doom of the present world economy, and the revolt against capitalism must eradicate this preoccupation which a capitalist society has imposed on all social values. Even the rebels have been tainted with this misdirection of human intelligence and the unconscionable enthusiasm of radical thinkers. Experiments in gargantuan industrialism can be traced to this dangerous distortion.

Huge cooperative enterprises of producers have emerged from the struggle which producers wage against monopoly control. As their sense of vested responsibility developed, they have more and more assumed the features of joint-stock companies. Their passion for exploitation has not been tempered by their humble origin. They have learnt too well the lesson of trustified capitalism, and they are as anxious to exact their monopoly toll as were the moguls of industry and finance against

**The Decline and Rise of The Consumer,* D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1936.

whom they originally raised the standard of revolt.

Students of the Histadrut who are aware of social trends in the *yishub* will find this feature an interesting tendency in the new Palestine. With the strengthening of the economy, the original investments of humble workers have come to represent respectable holdings in rich companies. Some of the leaders of Labor Palestine are only too well aware of the dangers involved and steps have been taken to make certain that in new cooperative ventures the Histadrut retain a considerable financial interest. It is thus hoped that the growth of the type of producers' cooperative which is so prevalent on the American continent will be curtailed.

In order to ensure the cooperative movement from running up the blind alley of joint-stock companies, Dr. Kallen insists that the primacy of the consumer must be part of its ideology. More than that, the institutional basis of the new society must make this primacy imperative. Thus ultimate control must always rest with the organized consumers. The Rochdale principles are the golden rules. Cooperative stores must sell their wares at the prices prevailing in the market. The franchise must be absolutely democratic, regardless of the number of shares held in the society. Profits must be shared in proportion to purchases, and outside financial assistance must be remunerated on the basis of a fixed rate of interest.

Dr. Kallen is of the opinion that the new world of consumers' cooperation is beginning to emerge in the midst of a dying capitalism. He denies that his social system is the fantasy of utopian dreamers. He maintains that it is rather an imperative development based on the satisfaction of the basic needs of human beings. "The consumers we are by nature were thrown into an artificial subjection to the producers we are compelled to be by nurture." The road of cooperation is the road to the life abundant.

The argument for the cooperative commonwealth has been well formulated, and Dr. Kallen is right in restating it in American idiom. At times, however, his economic reasoning is subject to question. He states, for example, (p. 80), "Plenty lowers price and cuts profits. . . ." Possibly he means the rate of profit per unit of industrial production, but total profit is most likely increased. Then he claims that, "Even though production decreases the burden of debt, the amount of debt-claims, interest, *dividends, rents and royalties, does not and will not decrease.*" (Italics ours.) Except for the early years of depression, it would be impossible to find a statistical verification for this statement. Again, in a footnote to the same page, he states, "In 1935 the banks are bursting with useless capital; *nevertheless,* savings banks report greatly increased deposits." (Italics ours.) He does not seem to realize that he is talking about the same thing under different names. This betrays a misunderstanding of certain vital links in our credit economy.

In an epilogue in which Dr. Kallen pictures the world of two thousand and forty-four doing homage to Rochdale, he gives full scope to his libertarian predilections in varied fields of social endeavor. If time proves he was on the side of the Lord, it will be more because of his liberal impulses, than for the realism of much of his economic criticism.